

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Original) An endoscope suitable for autoclaving comprising:

~~a soft barrier for separating an interior from an exterior,~~

~~wherein when said barrier is located at a predetermined position, consideration is taken into a displacement of said barrier between the position of said barrier observed before start of autoclaving and the position thereof observed after completion of the autoclaving during which predetermined pressure is applied and a thermal load is imposed,~~

~~whereby a member placed near said barrier is prevented from being broken due to the displacement of said barrier~~

a switch provided on an outer surface of the endoscope; and

a pressing member that shields the switch to keep the switch watertight, the pressing member including an elastic portion which can elastically deform in response to a pressure load and a presser movable in a direction in which the switch is pressed in response to elastic deformation of the elastic portion;

wherein a gap is provided between the switch and the presser, the gap being set so as be maintained even in a state in which the pressing member is loaded by pressurizing due to autoclaving.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) An endoscope according to Claim 1 [[2]], wherein the distance between ~~said~~ an end of said presser and said switch observed before start of autoclaving is set to a value that disables said presser of said pressing member from pressing said switch under pressure released at a decompression step of the autoclaving at which at least an autoclave is decompressed.

5. (Currently Amended) An endoscope according to Claim 1 [[2]], wherein the distance between ~~said~~ an end of said presser and said switch observed before start of autoclaving is set to a value that disables said presser of said pressing member from pressing said switch due to a difference in pressure occurring between a decompression step of the autoclaving and a pressurization step thereof.

6. (Currently Amended) An endoscope according to Claim 1 [[2]], further comprising a linking means that links ~~the~~ an interior of said endoscope and the exterior thereof when ~~the~~ an external pressure of said endoscope is lower than ~~the~~ an internal pressure thereof, and that seals the interior of said endoscope when the external pressure of said endoscope is higher than the internal pressure thereof.

7-15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) An endoscope according to Claim 1 [[2]], wherein said pressing member further comprises a waterproof film that shields said presser and said switch.

17. (Previously Presented) An endoscope according to Claim 16, wherein a coil spring is engaged with an inner surface of the waterproof film.